

# NEWS RELEASE



**USDA Forest Service**

**Rocky Mountain Region**

**Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands**

**Pikes Peak Ranger District**

601 South Weber Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Mike Welker, Forest Biologist, 719-553-1515

### **U.S. FOREST SERVICE BEGINS BEAR CREEK WATERSHED ASSESSMENT**

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo., Oct. 26, 2012** – Bear Creek on the Pike National Forest is home to the sole remaining population of pure greenback cutthroat trout. This recent discovery has prompted the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to review management of the Bear Creek watershed in El Paso and Teller Counties.

According to Forest Supervisor Jerri Marr, “Given the unique status of the population, we want to ensure our management in the watershed is conducive to the conservation and protection of this rare trout.”

An interdisciplinary team of resource specialists will be conducting a comprehensive review of activities in the watershed. This assessment will describe the current situation and identify key issues affecting the watershed. The outcome will identify opportunities to improve management and provide recommendations for future action. No decisions on future management will be made through the watershed assessment.

We invite the public to visit the USFS website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/psicc> for more specific information about the watershed assessment and to view related documents. The public is invited to provide comments regarding key issues and opportunities for improved management by December 1, 2012.

Questions and comments concerning the watershed assessment effort should be directed to Mike Welker, Forest Biologist, at 719-553-1515; email at: [mtwelker@fs.fed.us](mailto:mtwelker@fs.fed.us); or mail correspondence to: U.S. Forest Service, Bear Creek Watershed Assessment, 2840 Kachina Drive, Pueblo, CO 81008.

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Following completion of the watershed assessment, the USFS expects to move quickly into a NEPA process, which will also offer a public comment opportunity before decisions are made and projects are implemented.

The Bear Creek watershed is an important recreational area along the Front Range of Colorado. The creek is located on the east slope of Pikes Peak, beginning upstream of Jones Park five miles southwest of Colorado Springs and flowing northeast to Fountain Creek. The entire greenback population is found in 4.1 miles of the stream, of which 1.6 miles are on the Pike National Forest, Pikes Peak Ranger District.

The greenback cutthroat is the State Fish of Colorado and is also listed as a threatened species by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

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